The Melville Society NEWSLETTER

SPRING-SUMMER, 1959

Volume XV Numbers 1-2

The present issue of the *Newsletter* constitutes Nos. 1-2 of Vol. XV and is the last number edited by the acting secretary, who hereby completes nearly fifteen years of service as editor. The remaining numbers for Vol. XV will be prepared, it is hoped, by a new acting secretary and editor to be appointed by the president of the Society.

A particular pleasure is derived from the fact that publication of this issue coincides with the long-awaited appearance of the six-year Melville bibliography (1952-1957, inclusive) compiled by the Society's bibliographical committee. A copy of the bibliography accompanies the *Newsletter* on its way to all active members. Associate members and others may secure copies of the bibliography, while the supply holds out, for one dollar per copy.

Members of the committee which prepared the bibliography are Stuart C. Sherman (chairman), John H. Birss, and Gordon Roper. Their efforts have provided a tool of significance and usefulness to Melville scholarship. It is hardly necessary to mention the warm gratitude with which all other Melville scholars welcome their contribution. In addition to expressing its thanks to the bibliographical committee, the Society acknowledges a heavy debt of appreciation to the Providence (R.I.) Public Library, the staff and facilities of which have been borrowed freely during the many stages of the compilation and publication.

The bibliographical committee has not yet announced its plans for future annual bibliographies, though it may be hoped that the work will be continued hereafter on a regular basis. Preparation of an annual Melville bibliography certainly seems to be one of the most useful services which a Society of this kind can provide for its members. A report from the committee will no doubt be received and its future activities discussed at the Society's next annual meeting to be held in Chicago on December 28.

Until further notice, copies of the bibliography will be distributed by Tyrus Hillway, Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado. He will also continue to receive dues for membership in the Society until such time as the appointment of a new secretary is announced. Dues remain two dollars per year for active members and one dollar per year for associate members. Please make out checks to The Melville Society. In taking his leave of the *Newsletter*, which has been close to his heart for so many years, the acting secretary and editor wishes to thank the members who have given him the kind help and encouragement which have made the task possible. He reminds them that his successor will deserve and need the same help and encouragement from them. The retiring secretary's time will be devoted very largely, during the coming months, to the preparation, first, of an article on Melville for *Collier's Encyclopedia* and then of a fully documented account of Melville's life and works.

NOTES

Research in progress: "Toward *Moby-Dick*: A Study in Some Aspects of Melville's Reading and Style," by Robert Shulman at the Ohio State University.

Published March 16: Marius Bewley, *The Eccentric Design: Form in the Classic American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press). $4.00. Interpretations of Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, James, and Fitzgerald.

An outstanding performance of *Billy Budd* was given on the Du Pont "Show of the Month" program over CBS television on Monday evening, May 25. Audrey Gellen and Jacqueline Babbin adapted for television purposes the well-known dramatic version of the story made by Louis O. Coxe and Robert Chapman. It will be recalled that the play first appeared on Broadway during the 1951 season. Starring in the television broadcast of *Billy Budd* were James Donold (as Captain Vere), Don Murray (as Billy), Jason Robards, Jr. (as Claggart), and Roddy McDowall. The pro-

gram stirred unusual interest in television circles because of the remarks which David Susskind, its producer, had recently made, criticizing television fare in general as "flat, stale, and (esthetically) unprofitable."

Publication of *The Somers Mutiny Affair*, by Harrison Hayford, is expected this autumn or winter (probably during October) in the Prentice-Hall series of guided research projects.

Anyone interested in presenting a paper or wishing to suggest ideas for the annual meeting of the Society in Chicago this December should communicate at once with our president, Laurence Barrett, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Several inquiries have been made by our members concerning *Clarel* and other still-unpublished volumes in the Hendricks House edition of Melville's collected works. The publisher has not been replying to recent letters, and news from any member having first-hand knowledge of projected books in this edition would be appreciated.

Arthur G. Kennedy and Donald B. Sands are preparing a revised version of *A Concise Bibliography for Students of English*.

The Yale University Press has indicated that the Melville letters, edited by Harrison Hayford and Gordon Roper, are now in press.

In his latest checklist of inexpensive reprints of works (mainly novels) by important American authors, Walter Harding notes that the number of Melville titles at prices under $3.00 has increased from three in 1956 to twelve in 1959. At least twenty-nine different inexpensive editions of Melville novels or tales are now being published.

B. A. Sokoloff is working at Indiana State Teachers College on two studies relating to *Clarel*: "Melville and the Jews of *Clarel*" and "Herman Melville and Warder Cresson."

An exchange subscription has been arranged between the *Newletter* and *Abstracts of English Studies*, published at the University of Colorado for the National Council of Teachers of English.

The editor acknowledges with regret his error in reporting last year the alleged (and, fortunately, exaggerated) demise of Harper's edition of *Moby-Dick* in the Modern Classics series. A card from the publisher giving reassurance on the matter is enclosed with this issue of the *Newsletter*.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry K. Metcalf are moving from their lovely home on Gray Gardens East in Cambridge this autumn and retiring to an easier way of life at the Hotel Continental in the same city. As all our members know, Mrs. (Eleanor Melville) Metcalf is Melville's granddaughter.

Koh Kasegawa has been working on an article dealing with *Moby-Dick* which he plans to publish in a Japanese periodical.

The American Philosophical Society has awarded a research grant to Tyrus Hillway for travel, materials, and other expenses in connection with his projected biography of Melville.

Howard Horsford, now returned from a year in Rome, reports that he found the time to produce abroad, along with other pieces, two fairly long articles on his favorite subject.

Mrs. Harold V. Edwards is the new curator of the local history collection at the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield. Her duties will include supervision of the Melville Collection.

Klaus Lanzinger at the University of Innsbruck (Austria) will publish his study of Melville's primitivism and naturalism in September under the following title: *Primitivismus und Naturalismus im Prosaschaffen Herman Melvilles* (Innsbruck: Universitatsverlag Wagner) Clothbound, $4.50. Paperbound, $4.00.

THE *Melville Society* NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE Melville Society, a group of literary scholars and others interested in the life and works of Herman Melville. The Society seeks to facilitate the exchange of information among its members, to stimulate the study of Melville's life and works, and to encourage literary, historical, and bibliographical research. Membership is two dollars per year and includes all services of the Society. Associate membership (non-voting) is one dollar per year and includes all issues of the Newsletter. Address Tyrus Hillway, acting secretary, at Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado.